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# THE CHILDREN'S KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER





THE CHILDREN'S  
KING OF THE  
GOLDEN RIVER





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THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER  
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# THE CHILDREN'S KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER

*Adapted by*  
**F. H. LEE**

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## CHAPTER I

### *The Treasure Valley*

IN a lonely and mountainous part of Styria in Austria, there was, in olden times, a beautiful valley, where everything grew with the most surprising richness.

It was surrounded on all sides by steep and rocky



mountains rising into peaks which were always covered with snow, and from which many sparkling waterfalls dashed down over the rocks.

One of these, which flowed to the west, fell from so high a peak that, even when all the rest of the valley was in darkness, the setting sun still shone full upon it, making it look like a shower of gold. For this reason people used to call it The Golden River.



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

It was strange, however, that none of the streams fell into the valley itself, but ran down the other side of the mountains. Yet the clouds were drawn so often to the snowy hills and rested so softly in the hollow of the valley that, even if all the country round were parched and dry, there was still rain in the little valley.

Its crops were so heavy, and its hay so high, and its apples so red, and its grapes so blue, and its wine so rich, and its honey so sweet, that every one who saw it was full of wonder and called it the Treasure Valley.

Now the whole of this valley belonged to three brothers called Schwartz, Hans, and Gluck. Schwartz and Hans, the two elder brothers, were ugly men with overhanging eyebrows and small dull eyes which were always half-shut, so that you couldn't see into *them* and always fancied they saw very far into *you*.

They lived by farming the Treasure Valley, and very careful farmers they were. They killed everything that did not pay for its eating. They shot the blackbirds because they pecked the fruit; they poisoned the crickets for eating the crumbs in the kitchen; they worked their servants till they could work no more, then quarrelled with them and turned them out without paying them any wages.



## *The Treasure Valley*

They kept their corn stored away till it became scarce and dear, and then sold it for twice its value. They had heaps of gold lying about on their floors, yet never once had they given so much as a penny or a crust to the poor. Indeed they were so cruel



THE BLACK BROTHERS

and mean that every one called them the "Black Brothers."

The youngest brother, Gluck, who was not more than twelve years old, was quite the opposite. He was fair, blue-eyed, and kind to every living thing. When there was anything to roast for dinner, which was not often, he had to turn the 'spit' in front of the fire, while the meat cooked. At other times he used to clean the shoes and floors and sometimes the plates, now and again getting what was left on

## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

them to eat. Many times, alas, he was beaten by his cruel brothers.

Things went on in this way for a long time. At last there came a very wet summer when everything went wrong in the country outside Treasure Valley. The hay had hardly been got in when there was a great flood, and the hay-stacks were carried away bodily down to the sea. The vines were cut to pieces with the hail, and the corn was ruined. Only in the Treasure Valley was all safe, for, as it had rain when there was rain nowhere else, so it had sun when there was sun nowhere else.

People from all parts, therefore, came to buy corn from the Black Brothers, who charged a great deal too much for it and so became richer than ever. Yet when poor people who had no money begged for a little corn, Hans and Schwartz had no pity and turned them away to die of hunger at their very door.



## CHAPTER II

### *A Stranger at the Door*

It was drawing towards winter and very cold weather when one day Hans and Schwartz went out, saying to little Gluck, who was left as usual to roast the meat, "Be sure to let no one in, and give nothing out."

Gluck sat down quite close to the fire, for it was raining very hard and the kitchen-walls were damp and cheerless. He turned and turned the spit till the meat was roasted nice and brown. "What a pity," he said to himself, "my brothers never ask anybody to dinner when they have such a nice piece of mutton as this, and nobody else has so much as a piece of dry bread. I'm sure they would be much happier if they shared it with some one."

Just as he spoke, there came a double knock at the door, dull and heavy, as if the knocker had been tied up—it was more like a puff than a knock.

"It must be the wind," said Gluck, "nobody else would venture to knock double knocks at our door."

No, it wasn't the wind—there it came again more loudly, and, strangest of all, the knocker seemed to



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

be in a hurry and not in the least afraid of what might happen.

Gluck went to the window, opened it, and put his head out to see who it was.

It was the most extraordinary little gentleman



A DOUBLE KNOCK AT THE DOOR

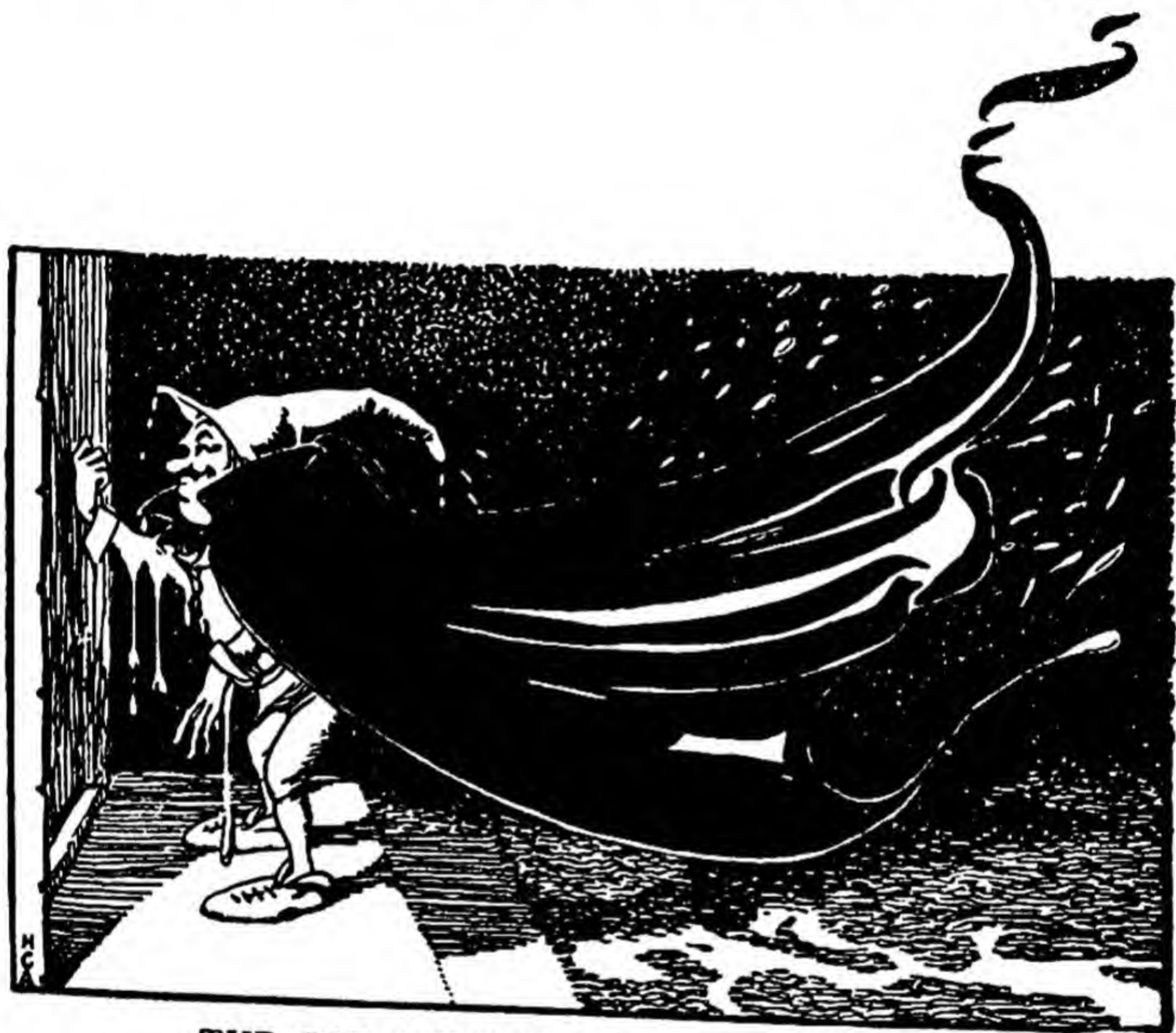
he had ever seen in his life. He had a very large nose and his cheeks were very round and very red, as if he had been blowing away for the last eight-and-forty hours at a fire that would not burn. His eyes twinkled merrily through long silky eyelashes; his moustaches curled twice round like a corkscrew on each side of his mouth, while his hair, which was of a curious salt-and-pepper colour, fell far down over his shoulders.



## *A Stranger at the Door*

He was about four-and-a-half feet high, and wore a pointed hat nearly as tall as himself, decorated with a black feather some three feet long.

His tunic or doublet stretched out to a long point



THE OLD GENTLEMAN KNOCKED AGAIN

at the back. This, however, was hidden in the folds of an enormous black glossy-looking cloak which the wind, whistling round the house, blew out to about four times the old gentleman's height.

Gluck was so struck with amazement by the sight of this strange visitor that he could not utter a word. The old gentleman knocked again more loudly

## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

than before and turned round to look after his fly-away cloak. In so doing he suddenly caught a glimpse of Gluck's little yellow head jammed in the window, with its mouth and eyes very wide open indeed.



## CHAPTER III

### *A Visitor in the Kitchen*

HULLO," said the little gentleman, "that's not the way to answer the door! I'm wet, let me in."

The little gentleman certainly was wet. His



"I'M WET, LET ME IN"

feather hung down between his legs like a beaten puppy's tail, and was dripping like an umbrella. From the ends of his moustaches the water was running into his waistcoat-pockets and out again like a mill-stream.

"I beg pardon, sir," said Gluck, "I'm very sorry, but I really can't."

## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

"Can't what?" said the old gentleman.

"I can't let you in, sir, I can't indeed; my brothers would beat me to death, sir, if I thought of such a thing. What do you want, sir, pray?"

"Want?" said the old gentleman in a fretful voice. "I want fire and shelter; and there's your great fire blazing, crackling, and dancing on the walls with nobody to feel it. Let me in, I say! I only want to warm myself."

By this time Gluck had had his head so long out of the window that he began to feel it was really unpleasantly cold, and when he turned and saw the beautiful fire rustling and roaring up the chimney, his heart melted within him that it should be burning away for nothing. "He does look very wet," said little Gluck to himself. "I'll just let him in for a quarter of an hour."

So round he went to the door and opened it. As the little gentleman walked in there came a gust of wind through the house that made the old chimneys totter.

"That's a good boy," said the little gentleman. "Never mind your brothers, I'll talk to them."

"Pray, sir, don't do any such thing," said Gluck. "I can't let you stay till they come, they'd be the death of me."

"Dear me," said the old gentleman, "I'm very sorry to hear that. How long may I stay?"



## *A Visitor in the Kitchen*

"Only till the mutton's done, sir," replied Gluck, "and it's very brown now."

Then the old gentleman walked into the kitchen and sat himself down on the hob by the fire with the top of his cap stretching away up the chimney, for it was a great deal too high for the roof.

"You'll soon be dry there, sir," said Gluck, and sat down again to turn the mutton.

But the old gentleman did *not* dry there, but went on drip, drip, dripping among the cinders, and the fire fizzed and sputtered and began to look very black and cheerless. Never was there such a cloak, every fold in it ran like a gutter.

"I beg pardon, sir," said Gluck at length, after watching the water spreading in long streams over the floor for a quarter of an hour, "mayn't I take your cloak?"

"No, thank you," said the old gentleman.

"Your cap, sir?"

"I'm all right, thank you," said the old gentleman rather gruffly.

"But—sir—I'm very sorry," said Gluck, "but—really, sir—you're—putting the fire out."

"It'll take longer to do the mutton, then," replied his visitor, "and so I can stay longer."

Gluck was very much puzzled and rather troubled at the behaviour of his guest, but he went on turning the meat round and round for another five minutes.



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

"That mutton looks very nice," said the old gentleman at length, "can't you give me a little bit?"

"Impossible, sir," said Gluck hurriedly.



NEVER WAS THERE SUCH A CLOAK

"I'm very hungry," continued the old gentleman. "I've had nothing to eat for two days. They surely couldn't miss a bit from the knuckle."

He spoke in so very sad a tone that it quite melted Gluck's heart.

"Well," he said, "they promised me one slice to-day, sir, I can give you that but not a bit more."

## *A Visitor in the Kitchen*

"That's a good boy," said the old gentleman again.

So Gluck warmed a plate and sharpened the knife. "I don't care if I do get beaten for it," he thought to himself, as he cut a large slice out of the mutton to give to his strange visitor.

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## CHAPTER IV

### *The Brothers' Return*

JUST at that moment there came a tremendous rap at the door. The old gentleman jumped off the hob as if it had suddenly become too hot. Gluck fitted the slice quickly and carefully into the mutton again and ran to open the door.

"What did you keep us waiting in the rain for?" said Schwartz, as he walked in, throwing his umbrella in Gluck's face.

"Ay, what for, indeed, you little rogue?" said Hans, boxing Gluck's ear as he followed his brother into the kitchen.

"Bless my soul," said Schwartz as he caught sight of the old gentleman.

"Amen," said the little gentleman, who had taken his cap off and was standing in the middle of the kitchen, bowing very quickly up and down.

"Who's that?" said Schwartz, catching up a rolling-pin, and turning to Gluck with a fierce frown.

"I don't know, indeed, brother," said Gluck in great terror.

"How did he get in?" roared Schwartz.

"My dear brother," said Gluck in a pleading voice, "he was so very wet."

## *The Brothers' Return*

Schwartz was about to bring the rolling-pin crashing down on Gluck's head when the stranger placed his pointed cap in the way, and the rolling-



"AMEN," SAID THE LITTLE OLD GENTLEMAN

pin, instead of hitting Gluck's head, hit the cap. So great was the shock that it shook the water out of the cap all over the room. What was even more odd, the rolling-pin no sooner touched the cap than it flew into the corner at the farther end of the room.



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

"Who are you, sir?" demanded Schwartz.

"I'm a poor old man, sir," the little gentleman began very humbly. "I saw your fire through the window and begged shelter for a quarter of an hour."

"Have the goodness to walk out again, then," said Schwartz, "we've quite enough water in our kitchen already."

"It's a cold day to turn an old grey-haired man out of doors, sir," said the little gentleman, "and I'm very, very hungry, sir; couldn't you spare me a bit of bread before I go?"

"Bread indeed?" said Schwartz. "Do you suppose we've nothing to do with our bread but to give it to such fellows as you?"

"Why don't you sell your feather?" cried Hans in a mocking voice. "Out with you, no bread shall you have from us!"

"A little bit," said the old gentleman.

"Be off!" said Schwartz.

"Pray gentlemen——" began the old gentleman once more.

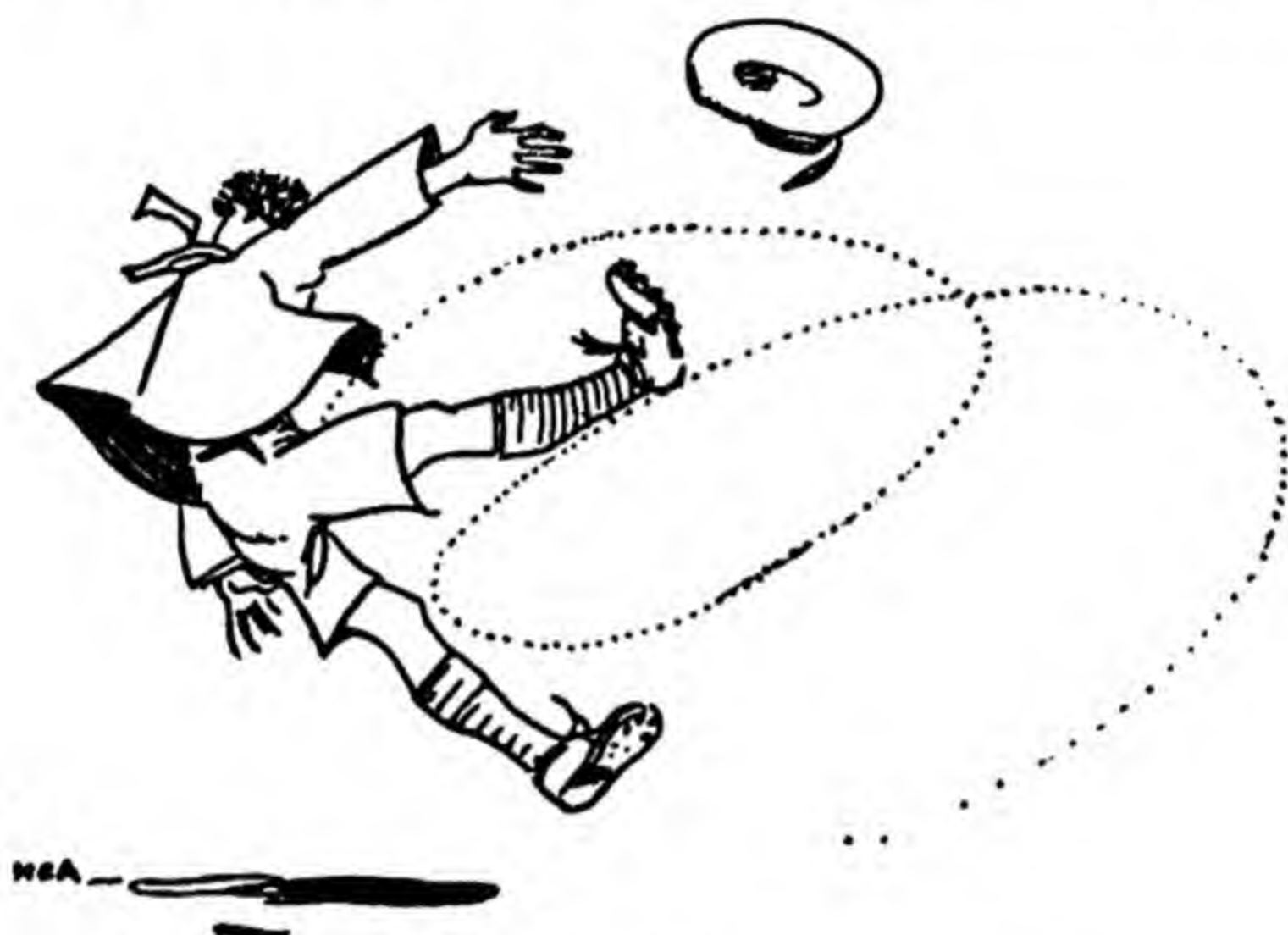
"Off with you!" cried Hans, seizing him by the collar. But he had no sooner touched the old gentleman's collar, than away he went after the rolling-pin, spinning round and round till he fell into the corner on the top of it.

This made Schwartz very angry, and he ran at

## *The Brothers' Return*

the old gentleman to turn him out; but he also had hardly touched him, when away he also went after Hans and the rolling-pin, and hit his head against the wall as he tumbled into the corner. So there they lay, all three.

The old gentleman then spun himself round very



SPINNING ROUND AND ROUND

quickly in the opposite direction till his long cloak was all wound neatly about him. He clapped his cap on his head, very much on one side (for it could not stand upright without going through the ceiling), gave another twist to his corkscrew moustaches and said very calmly, "Gentlemen, I wish you a very good morning. At twelve o'clock to-night I'll call again, and since you have treated me so rudely, that visit will be the last I shall ever pay you."



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

"If ever I catch you here again," muttered Schwartz, coming half-frightened out of the corner—but, before he could finish his sentence the old gentleman whisked himself out of the house and shut the door behind him with a great bang.

Like a wreath of ragged cloud he was whirled away down the valley, turning over and over in the air, and vanishing at last in a gust of rain.



## CHAPTER V

### *The Midnight Visit*

A VERY pretty business indeed, Mr Gluck!" said Schwartz, when the old gentleman had gone. "Well, dish the mutton, sir, and if ever I catch you at such a trick again—why bless me, the mutton's been cut!"

"Oh, brother," said Gluck in fear, "you know you promised me one slice."

"Oh, indeed, and you were cutting it hot I suppose, and going to catch all the gravy. It'll be a long time before I promise you such a thing again. Go at once to the coal-cellar and stay there till I call you."

Gluck went off sadly enough, for he dared not disobey. The brothers ate all the mutton they could, then they locked the rest in the cupboard. Afterwards they settled down to drink as much wine as possible.

Such a night it was! Howling wind and rushing rain without ceasing. The brothers had just sense enough after a while to put up all the shutters and double bar the door before they went to bed. Gluck too climbed to his little room, and all were soon asleep.



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

As the clock struck twelve, however, Hans and Schwartz were awakened by a tremendous crash. The door of their room burst open and the house shook from top to bottom.



THE TWO BROTHERS STARED INTO THE DARKNESS

“What’s that?” cried Schwartz, starting up in his bed.

“Only I,” said the little gentleman.

The two brothers sat up on their bolster, and stared into the darkness. Through a hole in the shutter a few rays of moonlight found their way, and by this light Hans and Schwartz saw that the room was swimming with water, in the middle of which was an enormous bubble spinning round and bobbing up and down like a cork.

On this bubble, as if on a most wonderful cushion, lay the little old gentleman, cap and all. (There

## *The Midnight Visit*

was plenty of room for his cap now, for the roof of the house had been blown off.)

"Sorry to cause you any trouble," said their visitor, taunting them. "I'm afraid your beds are rather damp—perhaps you had better go to your brother's room, I've left the ceiling on there."

Without waiting another moment they rushed into Gluck's room, wet through and full of fear.

"You'll find my card on the kitchen-table," the old gentleman called after them. "Remember, this is my last visit." Then the bubble disappeared.

Dawn came at last, and the two brothers looked out of Gluck's little window. The Treasure Valley was one mass of ruins.

The tempest had swept away the trees and crops and cattle, leaving nothing but a waste of red sand and grey mud. Shivering and frightened, Hans and Schwartz crept into the kitchen, only to find that their corn, money, and almost everything else had been carried away by the water.

Upon the table, however, was a small white card, on which was written in large, breezy, long-legged letters the words:



*Southwest Wind  
Esquire*



## CHAPTER VI

### *The Golden Mug*

SOUTH-WEST WIND ESQUIRE was as good as his word and never came to the Treasure Valley again, and, what was worse, he persuaded his relations, the West Winds, to keep away too. Because of this no rain fell in the valley from one year's end to another, and, though all the plains round were green and fruitful, the land of the Three Brothers became nothing but a desert, just full of shifting red sand.

The brothers, therefore, had to set out and seek a living elsewhere. All their money was gone, and they had nothing left but some curious old-fashioned dishes and vessels of gold.

"Suppose we turn goldsmiths?" suggested Schwartz to Hans as they entered a large city. "We will melt down these gold vessels and we can mix copper with the gold without anyone finding it out."

"A good thought," replied Hans.

So they hired a furnace and became goldsmiths. But they did not prosper, for people discovered that the brothers were mixing copper with the gold and would not buy much from them. Then, too, whenever they had sold anything, they would leave

## *The Golden Mug*

Gluck to mind the furnace while they wasted their time and money in the ale-house next door.

As time passed they grew poorer and poorer and at last there was only one large drinking-mug left. Now this mug belonged to Gluck, having been given to him long before by his uncle. He was very



ONLY ONE LARGE  
DRINKING-MUG LEFT

fond of it and would not have parted with it for the world, though he never drank anything out of it but milk and water.

The mug was indeed a very curious one. The handle was formed of two wreaths of flowing golden hair, so finely spun that it looked more like silk than metal. These wreaths joined themselves to a beard and whiskers as finely spun as the hair.

On the front of the mug was a very fierce little face with a pair of sharp eyes which seemed able to see all round. It was impossible to drink out of the mug without feeling their gaze upon you,



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

and once Schwartz declared he had even seen them wink.

The thought of his mug being melted to be made into spoons nearly broke poor little Gluck's heart. But the brothers only laughed at him, tossed the mug into the melting-pot and staggered out to the



NEARLY BROKE POOR  
LITTLE GLUCK'S HEART

ale-house once more, leaving Gluck as usual to watch the furnace.

When they were gone Gluck took a farewell look at his old friend in the melting-pot. The flowing hair was all gone, nothing remained but the red nose and the sparkling eyes which, however, looked more full of mischief and wickedness than ever.

"And no wonder," thought Gluck, "after being treated in that way."

Very sadly Gluck went over to the window and sat down, glad to catch the fresh evening air after

## *The Golden Mug*

the heat of the furnace. As he gazed out he could see the mountains in the distance; there, too, he saw the peak from which fell the wonderful Golden River.

The mountain-tops were all crimson and purple



“BLESS ME, WHAT’S THAT?”

in the sunset, while bright fiery-looking clouds seemed burning and quivering above them. Brighter, however, than all else was the river which fell like a waving column of pure gold over the steep rocks.

“Ah!” said Gluck aloud, after he had looked at it for a while, “if that river were really all gold, what a splendid thing it would be.”



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

"No it wouldn't, Gluck," said a clear, ringing voice, close at his ear.

"Bless me, what's that!" exclaimed Gluck, jumping up. There was nobody there. He looked round the room, and under the table, and a great many times behind him, but there was certainly nobody there, and he sat down again at the window. This time he didn't speak, but he couldn't help thinking again that it would be very fortunate if the river were really all gold.

"Not at all, my boy," said the same voice, louder than before.

"Bless me!" said Gluck again, "what is that?"

He looked into all the corners and cupboards and then began turning round and round as fast as he could in the middle of the room, thinking there must be somebody behind him.

Once more he heard the same voice. It was singing now, very merrily, "lala-lira-la"; no words, only a quiet little tune something like that of a kettle on the boil.

Gluck looked out of the window. No, it was certainly in the house. Upstairs and downstairs; no, it was certainly in that very room. Quicker and clearer every moment came the song, "lala-lira-la."

All at once it struck Gluck that it sounded louder near the furnace. He ran to the opening and looked in; yes, he was right, it seemed to be coming not

## *The Golden Mug*

only out of the furnace but out of the very melting-pot itself. He uncovered it, and then ran back in a great fright;—the pot was certainly singing! Gluck stood in the farthest corner of the room with his hands up and his mouth open, staring at the furnace in astonishment.



## CHAPTER VII

### *The Dwarf King*

GLUCK stood thus for a moment or two, then the singing stopped and the voice from the melting-pot became clear.

"Hullo," it said.

Gluck made no answer.

"Hullo, Gluck, my boy," said the voice again.

So, gathering up all his courage, Gluck walked straight over to the melting-pot, drew it out of the furnace and looked at it.

Inside the gold was all melted, and its surface was as smooth and polished as a river. There as he looked he saw, as from beneath the gold, the red nose and sharp eyes of his old friend of the mug, a thousand times redder and sharper than ever before.

"Come, Gluck, my boy," said the same voice once more, "I'm all right, pour me out."

But Gluck was too much astonished to do anything of the kind.

"Pour me out, I say," said the voice rather gruffly.

Still Gluck couldn't move.

"*Will* you pour me out?" said the voice, almost angrily. "I'm too hot."

This time Gluck managed to recover the use of



## *The Dwarf King*

his hands; he took hold of the melting-pot and tilted it so as to pour out the gold. But instead of a stream of liquid gold there came out first a pair of pretty little yellow legs, then some coat tails, then a pair of arms stuck a-kimbo. Last of all came the little yellow head of his friend of the mug. All these put themselves together as they rolled out and stood up briskly on the floor, in the shape of a little golden dwarf about a foot-and-a-half high.

"That's right," said the dwarf, stretching out first his legs, and then his arms. He then shook his head up and down and as far round as it would go for five minutes without stopping. He did all this as though trying to see if he were quite correctly put together, while Gluck stared at him, speechless with amazement.

The little dwarf was dressed in a tunic of spun gold, so fine that many beautiful colours gleamed over it like mother-of-pearl. Over this brilliant doublet, his hair and beard fell quite half-way to



INSTEAD OF A STREAM  
OF LIQUID GOLD



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

the ground, in waving curls, so wonderfully delicate that Gluck could hardly tell where they ended, they seemed almost to melt into the air.

The face, however, was rather coarse and gave one the idea that this little person had a very decided will of his own and meant to have his own way.

When the dwarf had finished looking at himself he turned his sharp eyes full on Gluck and stared at him steadily for a few moments, and then said, "No, it wouldn't, Gluck, my boy."

"Wouldn't it, sir?" said Gluck very quietly and humbly.

"No," said the dwarf decidedly, "no, it wouldn't."

And with that the dwarf pulled his cap hard over his brows and took two turns, three feet long, up and down the room, lifting his legs up very high and setting them down very hard.

This gave Gluck time to collect his thoughts a little, and seeing no great reason now to be afraid of such a tiny visitor and being very curious to know who he was, he said rather hesitatingly, "Pray, sir, were you my mug?"

The little man turned sharply round, walked straight up to Gluck, drew himself up to his full height and said proudly, "I am the King of the Golden River."



## *The Dwarf King*

Then he turned about again, and took two more turns, some six feet long, in order to allow Gluck time to think over what he had said. After this he again walked up to Gluck and stood still as if expecting him to make some reply.



“PRAY, SIR, WERE YOU MY MUG?”

Gluck was determined to say something this time, so he said, “I hope your Majesty is very well.”

“Listen,” said the little man, not troubling to reply to Gluck’s remark. “I am the King of what mortals call the Golden River. I was compelled by a stronger King to take the shape you saw on the golden mug. Now you have set me free from the enchantment, and I am willing to serve you. Therefore attend to what I tell you. Whoever shall climb to the top of that mountain from which the Golden River falls and shall cast into the stream



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

three drops of holy water, for him, and him only, shall the river turn to gold.

“But beware, for none may try a second time. And if anyone casts unholy water into the river he shall be overcome by the stream and will be changed into a black stone for ever.”

So saying, the King of the Golden River walked straight into the centre of the hottest flame of the furnace. His figure became red, then white, then in a blaze of dazzling light it rose, trembled, and disappeared. The King of the Golden River had vanished.

“Oh,” cried poor Gluck, running to look up the chimney after him, “Oh dear, dear, dear me! My mug, my mug, my mug!”

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Hans' Journey to the River—I*

THE King of the Golden River had scarcely gone when Hans and Schwartz returned noisily from the ale-house, and when they heard of the loss of the Golden Mug they beat Gluck without pity till their arms were tired, for, though he told them his story was true, they would not believe a word of it. Then they went off to bed.

The next morning, however, they began to think there might be something in the story after all, and as they had no money left they immediately began to quarrel as to which of them should first try to climb the mountain and get the gold.

They even drew their swords and began fighting about it, and made so much noise that the neighbours were alarmed. In the end Schwartz was taken before the judge of the city who sent him to prison till he could pay a heavy fine, for disturbing the peace.

Hans, however, had managed to hide away, and there he stayed till the trouble was over. As soon as Schwartz was in prison Hans determined to set out immediately for the Golden River.

How to get the holy water was the question. He went to the priest for it, but he, of course, would



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

not give holy water to so bad a man. Hans, therefore, waited till the evening service and stole a cupful from the church.

Next morning he got up very early, put the holy water into a strong flask, and two bottles of wine



HANS STOLE A CUPFUL FROM  
THE CHURCH

and some meat into a basket. Then, slinging them over his back, and with a strong staff for climbing, he set off for the mountains.

It was a wonderful morning, and through the mists of dawn the lower cliffs of the mountains seemed like great grey shadows rising gradually till they caught the sunlight.

Then far beyond and above all towered the snow-clad peaks, pure and changeless, which



## *Hans' Journey to the River—I*

seemed almost to be asleep in the wonderful blue sky.

Hans, however, cared little for the beauty of all before him; his thoughts were of the Golden River alone. He set off walking very quickly in his eagerness to reach it, quite forgetting the great distance he had to go, and that he ought not therefore to tire himself too soon.

His way lay at first over green and rather low hills, but before he had climbed these he was very weary, because of his unwise haste at the beginning.

After a while he came to a large glacier or river of ice. He had never seen one before and found it very difficult to cross. The ice was very slippery, and there were great cracks or chasms in the path. From these came wild sounds of gushing water, and loud cries and sudden shrieks as if human beings were in distress or pain, yet he could see no one near.

The ice, too, was broken into thousands of ghostly shapes, while his eyes were dazzled by strange lights. His ears grew dull and his head became giddy with the rush and roar of hidden streams.

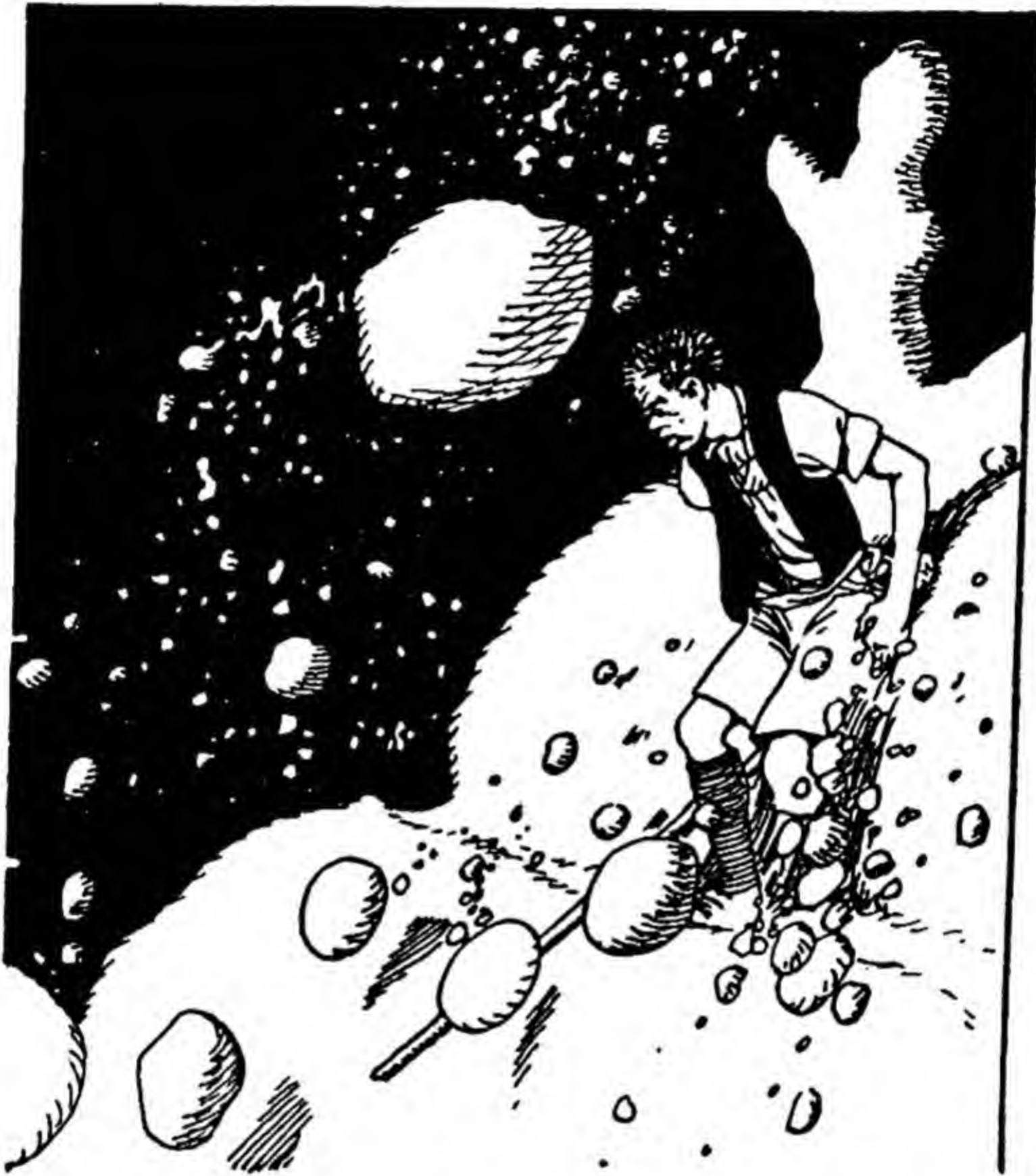
As he went on, Hans grew more uneasy than ever. Great masses of snow and ice rushed past him or fell thundering across his path, and as he leaped the last chasm of the glacier he flung himself on the firm grass of the mountain, trembling with terror.

He had been compelled to throw away his basket



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

of bread and wine as it was too much of a burden to carry across the dangerous glacier, and he was now faint with hunger and thirst.



GREAT MASSES OF SNOW AND ICE RUSHED PAST HIM

He sat down and broke off some of the pieces of ice round to moisten his lips. Then after an hour's rest he began his journey once more.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Hans' Journey to the River—II*

BEFORE long he had to climb up a ridge of bare red rock, where there was no grass to ease his steps and no shade from the blazing sun. He toiled on till past noon. The sun's rays beat down more fiercely



HANS GREW TERRIBLY WEARY

upon the steep path, and Hans grew terribly weary and parched with thirst. He glanced down many times at the flask of holy water which hung at his belt. "Three drops are enough to cast in the river," he said at last to himself. "I may at least just cool my lips with it."



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

He opened the flask and was about to raise it to his lips, when his eye fell on something lying on the rock beside him; he thought it moved.

It was a small dog, which was dying of thirst. Its tongue was out, and its legs were limp and lifeless. It looked longingly at the water in the bottle which Hans held, as if to ask for a drink.

But Hans had no pity, and pushing the poor animal away with his foot, he drank some of the water himself and passed on. As he did so

A STRANGE SHADOW CAME SUDDENLY  
ACROSS THE BLUE SKY.

The path now became steeper and more rugged every moment and the clear air of the hills, instead of refreshing him, made him hot and feverish. The noise of the waterfalls seemed to mock him, and his thirst was terrible to bear.

For another hour he toiled on, and again he looked down to the flask at his side. It was half empty, but there was still much more than three drops in it.

He stopped to open it and once more, as he did so, something moved in the path above him. It was a fair child lying on the rock and almost dead with thirst. Its eyes were closed and its lips were parched and burning.



## *Hans' Journey to the River—II*

Hans looked at it, but had no pity, and raising the flask he drank some of the water and passed on--

AND A DARK GREY CLOUD CAME OVER  
THE SUN AND LONG SNAKE-LIKE  
SHADOWS CREPT UP ALONG THE  
MOUNTAIN-SIDES.

Hans struggled on. The sun was setting, but the air was still almost too hot to breathe. The climb, however, was now nearly over, for he could see the stream of the Golden River springing from the hills not far above him.

For a moment he rested, then sprang on his way. At this instant a faint cry fell on his ear. He turned and saw a grey-haired old man lying on the rocks. His face was very pale and almost in despair he stretched out his arms to Hans and cried feebly, "Water! Water! I am dying."

"I have none," replied Hans, and stepping over the old man's body he hurried on his way.

A FLASH OF BLUE LIGHTNING SWEEPED  
LIKE A SWORD ACROSS THE SKY  
AND THE WHOLE HEAVEN GREW  
DARK.

And now Hans stood on the brink of the chasm through which the Golden River ran. The sunset glow lit up the waves with a flaming light; louder



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

and louder roared the river as with a voice of thunder.

Hans drew the flask from his belt and hurled it



A FLASH OF BLUE LIGHTNING

into the middle of the torrent. Immediately an icy chill shot through his body. He staggered, shrieked, and fell, and the waters closed over him for ever.

Then the moaning of the river rose wildly into the night as the waters gushed over THE BLACK STONE.

## CHAPTER X

### *Schwartz seeks for Gold*

POOR little Gluck waited very anxiously alone in the house for Hans' return; finding he did not come back he was terribly frightened and went to the prison to tell Schwartz what had happened.

Instead of being troubled, Schwartz was very pleased and said that Hans must have been turned into a black stone by the King of the Golden River, and now he himself could have all the gold.

Gluck, however, was very sorry and cried all night. When he rose in the morning, there was no bread in the house nor any money, and he therefore went and hired himself to another goldsmith.

He worked so hard and so neatly and so long every day that he soon earned enough money to pay his brother's fine. With a glad heart he went to prison and gave it all to Schwartz, who was then set free.

Schwartz was now quite pleased with Gluck and promised to give him some of the gold of the river. Gluck, however, cared nothing for the gold but was grieved about Hans and begged Schwartz to go and see what had become of him.

When Schwartz heard how Hans had stolen the holy water he thought that maybe this was why



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

the King of the Golden River had punished Hans. He, therefore, determined to manage better himself.

So taking some of Gluck's money he went to a bad priest to buy some holy water. The priest was



HE WENT TO THE PRISON

only too ready to sell it, and Schwartz felt sure that this would do quite well.

Very early the next morning he got up, took some bread and wine in a basket, and putting his holy water in a flask, he set off for the mountains.

Like his brother Hans he was most surprised when he came to the glacier, and found it just as difficult to cross. He, too, was compelled to throw away the basket with the bread and wine.

It was a cloudless but dull day; a heavy purple mist hung over the sky, and the hill looked very

## *Schwartz seeks for Gold*

gloomy. As Schwartz climbed the steep rocky path he became parched with thirst just as his brother Hans had done. So having nothing else with him he lifted the flask of holy water to his lips to drink.

At the same moment he saw the same fair child lying near him on the rocks. It cried to him and moaned for water.

"Water, indeed!" said Schwartz. "I haven't half enough for myself," and he passed on, but as he went the light grew more dim and

A LOW BANK OF BLACK CLOUD ROSE  
OUT OF THE WEST.

For another hour he climbed on, and again thirst overcame him. Once more he raised the flask to his lips. This time he saw the old grey-haired gentleman lying before him on the path and heard him cry out for water.

"Water, indeed!" said Schwartz. "I haven't half enough for myself," and on he went.

Again the light seemed to fade from before his eyes, and as he looked up he saw that a crimson mist had come over the sun and

THE BANK OF BLACK CLOUD HAD RISEN  
VERY HIGH.

Its edges were tossing and tumbling like the waves of an angry sea, and they cast long shadows which flickered over Schwartz's path.



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

Then Schwartz climbed for another hour, and again his thirst returned. When he lifted his flask to his lips he thought he saw his brother Hans lying helpless on the path before him.



THE BANK OF BLACK CLOUD HAD RISEN VERY HIGH

As he gazed the figure stretched out its arms to him and cried for water.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Schwartz, "are *you* there? Water, indeed! Do you suppose I carried it all the way up here for you?"

So saying he strode over the figure, and when he had gone on a few yards he looked back—the figure was not there.

Then a sudden fear came over Schwartz, though he could not tell why. Yet so great was his longing for the gold that he rushed on,

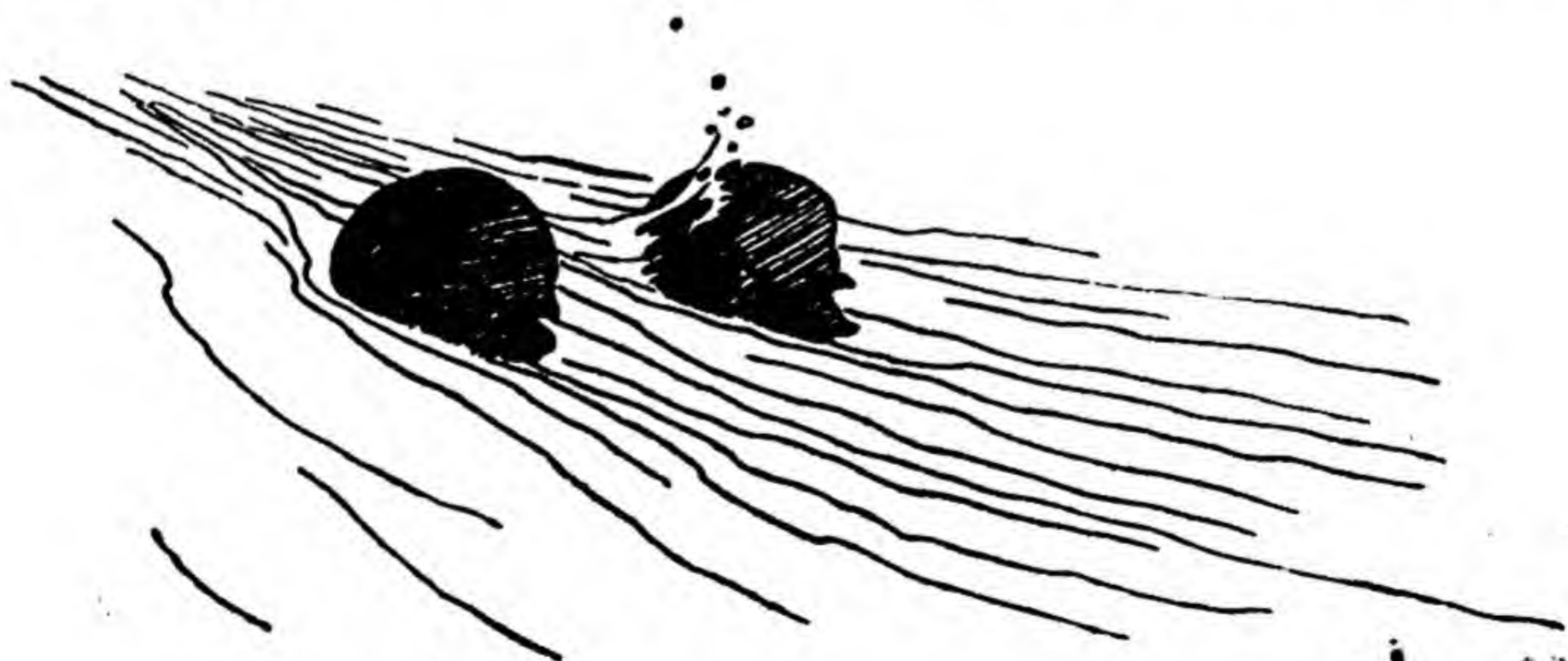
## *Schwartz seeks for Gold*

AND THE BANK OF BLACK CLOUD ROSE  
TO ITS HEIGHT.

Out of it came flashes of lightning and waves of darkness passed over the heavens. A strong wind, too, sprang up, breaking the last crimson clouds of sunset into fragments and scattering them far into the darkness.

Schwartz now stood by the brink of the Golden River. Its waves were black, but their foam was bright like fire. The roar of the waters below and the thunder of the air above seemed to melt as he cast the flask into the stream.

Immediately the lightning glared into his eyes; the earth gave way beneath him and the waters closed over his cry. He, too, had been drawn into the stream, and the moaning of the river rose wildly into the night as it now gushed over TWO BLACK STONES.





## CHAPTER XI

### *Gluck climbs the Mountain*

WHEN Gluck found that Schwartz did not come back he was very sad and did not know what to do. He had no money left, and was obliged to go and hire himself again to the goldsmith, who worked him very hard and gave him very little money in return.

After a month or two, Gluck grew tired and made up his mind to go and try his fortune with the Golden River.



HE HAD SEVERAL VERY BAD FALLS

## *Gluck climbs the Mountain*

"The little King looked very kind," he thought. "I don't think he will turn me into a black stone."

So he went to the priest, who gave him some holy water as soon as he asked for it. Then Gluck



### STRANGE NOISES UNDER THE ICE

took some bread in his basket and the bottle of water, and set off very early next morning for the mountains.

The glacier had been difficult for his brothers to cross, but it was twenty times more so for Gluck, who was neither so strong nor so used to climbing mountains as they. He had several very bad falls, lost his basket and bread, and was very much frightened at the strange noises under the ice.



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

After he had crossed the glacier he lay for a long time on the grass to rest, and began to climb the hill just in the hottest part of the day. When he had climbed for an hour he grew dreadfully thirsty, and like his brothers he drew out the flask from his belt and raised it to his lips. Just as he was going to drink he saw an old man coming down the path above him looking very feeble and leaning on a staff.

“My son,” said the old man, “I am faint with thirst, give me some of that water.”

Gluck looked at him and saw that he was pale and weary, so he gave him the flask saying, “Pray don’t drink it all.”

But the old man drank a great deal, and giving him back the bottle two-thirds empty, bade him good speed.

In spite of his thirst Gluck’s heart was glad, for the path had suddenly become easier to his feet—

AND TWO OR THREE BLADES OF GRASS  
APPEARED UPON IT.

Grasshoppers, too, began chirping on the bank beside him, and Gluck thought he had never heard such merry singing.

For another hour he went on, then his thirst became so great that he thought he should be

## *Gluck climbs the Mountain*

forced to drink. But as he raised the flask he saw a little child lying panting by the roadside.

It cried out piteously for water, and Gluck, after



HE THOUGHT HE SHOULD BE FORCED TO DRINK

a struggle with his thoughts, determined to bear the thirst himself a little longer. He therefore put the bottle to the child's lips, and it drank all but a few drops of the water.

Then as he watched it, the child smiled up at him, got up, and ran down the hill. Gluck looked



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

after it till it seemed as small as a little star and turning round he began climbing once more—

SUDDENLY THERE WERE ALL KINDS OF  
SWEET FLOWERS GROWING ON THE  
ROCKS.

Bright green moss, too, was there, with pale pink starry flowers; beautiful gentian blossoms appeared, more blue than the sky itself, and pure white lilies also had grown there.

Crimson and purple butterflies darted hither and thither, the sky became so bright that Gluck had never felt so happy in his life, and he went on his way.

Yet when he had climbed for another hour his thirst became almost more than he could bear. He looked at the bottle, there were only five or six drops left in it, and he dared not drink that.

He was just putting the flask back in his belt again when he saw a little dog lying on the rocks gasping for breath.

Gluck stopped and looked at it and then at the Golden River, not very far above him. He thought of the dwarf's words, "No one can have a second chance." He tried to pass the dog, but it whined piteously and Gluck stopped again.

"Poor beastie," said Gluck, "it'll be dead when I come down again if I don't help it."

## *Gluck climbs the Mountain*

Closer and closer he looked at it, and its eye turned on him so sorrowfully that he could not bear it any longer.

“Bother the King and his gold, too,” he said, and opening his flask he poured the few drops that were left into the dog’s mouth.



HE POURED THE FEW DROPS INTO THE  
DOG'S MOUTH



## CHAPTER XII

### *The King of the Golden River*

IN a flash the dog sprang up and stood on its hind legs. Its tail disappeared, its ears grew long, longer, silky, golden. Its nose became very red and its eyes twinkled merrily.

In three seconds the dog was gone and before Gluck stood his old friend, the King of the Golden River. Gluck stared at him in alarm.

"Thank you," he said, "but don't be frightened, it's all right. Why didn't you come before instead of sending me those rascally brothers of yours for me to have the trouble of turning into stones! Very hard stones they make too."

"Oh, dear me," said Gluck. "Have you really been so cruel?"

"Cruel!" said the dwarf. "Why, they poured unholy water into my stream; do you suppose I'm going to allow that?"

"Indeed," said Gluck, "I am sure, sir—your Majesty, I mean—they got the water out of the church font. It was holy water."

"Very likely," said the dwarf, his face growing stern as he spoke, "but by refusing to give it to the weary and dying they made it unholy."

The dwarf then stooped and plucked a lily that

## *The King of the Golden River*

grew at his feet. On its white leaves hung three drops of clear dew. He shook them into the empty flask which Gluck held in his hand, saying, "Cast these into the river and then go down on the other



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THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER HAD VANISHED

side of the mountains into the Treasure Valley, and so good speed."

Suddenly the figure of the dwarf grew indistinct. The colours of his robe became a mist of dewy light. Fainter and fainter it grew, then the mist rose into the air. The King of the Golden River had vanished, and Gluck was left alone.

He climbed to the brink of the Golden River. Its waves were as clear as crystal and as bright as the sun. When he cast the three drops of dew into



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

the stream, there appeared, where they fell, a small whirlpool into which the waters fell with a sound like music.

For some time Gluck stood watching it, very



THE WATERS SEEMED TO BE GROWING SMALLER

disappointed because the river did not turn to gold as he had expected it would. Not only that, but the waters seemed to be growing smaller.

Yet he obeyed his friend the dwarf and, turning aside, he began his journey down the other side of the mountains towards the Treasure Valley.

As he went he thought he heard the sound of water making its way under the ground. At length



## *The King of the Golden River*

when he came in sight of the Treasure Valley, he found that a river like the Golden River was springing from a new cleft of the rocks above it, and was flowing in countless streams among the dry heaps of red sand.

Even while Gluck gazed, fresh green grass and creeping plants sprang beside the new streams. Young flowers opened suddenly along the river sides, just as stars appear in the evening sky. Myrtles and vines cast long shadows over the valley as they grew.

The Treasure Valley had become a garden again, and the land which had been lost by the cruel ways of Hans and Schwartz had been won back by the loving-kindness of Gluck.

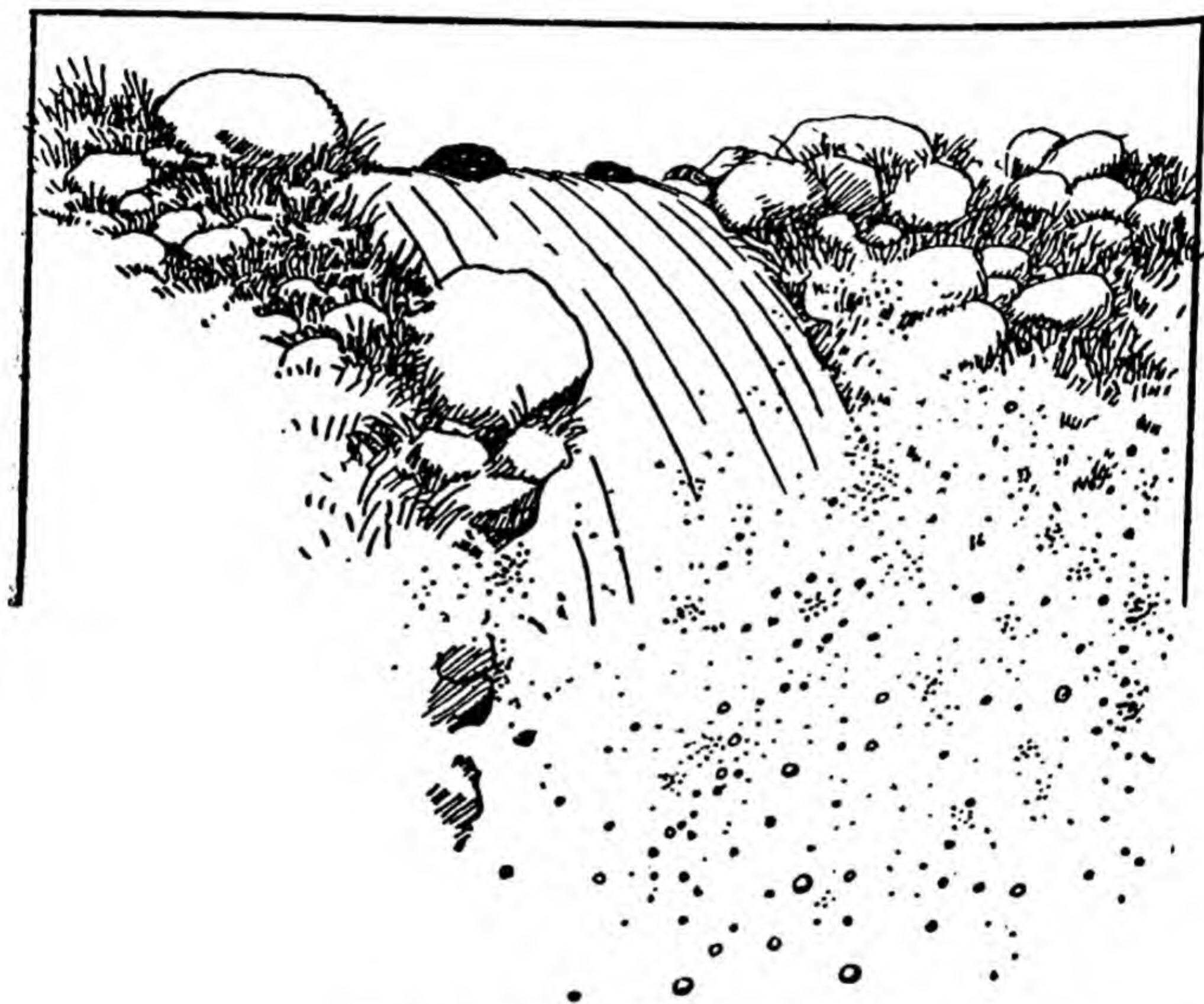
So Gluck went and lived in the valley, which was watered afresh by the wonderful river. Everything grew and flourished there. Gluck's barns were soon full of corn, and he became very rich. Thus the dwarf's promised words had indeed come true, the river had proved to be a River of Gold, and Gluck prospered exceedingly—nor were the poor ever turned away from his door.

The people of the valley still point out the place where the three drops of holy dew were cast into the stream. They show also the path of the Golden River under the ground till it falls into the Treasure Valley.



## *The Children's King of the Golden River*

And at the top of the Waterfall of the Golden River are still to be seen TWO BLACK STONES round which the waters howl mournfully every day at sunset. These same two stones are still called by the people of the valley—THE BLACK BROTHERS.



**THE BLACK BROTHERS**

